



# Pritchard Mayor.

*Martis vi. die Februarii, 1682. Annoq; Regis. Caroli  
Secund. Angl. &c. xxxvi.*

**T**His Court doth desire Mr. *Young* to Print his  
Sermon, Preached before the Lord Mayor  
and Aldermen, at the *Guild-Hall* Chappel, on *Sunday*  
Morning last.

*Wagstaffe.*





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A  
S E R M O N

P R E A C H E D

Before the Right Honourable

T H E

Lord Mayor

A N D

A L D E R M E N.

A T

*Guild-Hall Chappel, February 4. 1682.*

By *Edward Young*, Fellow of the College  
near *Winchester*.

L O N D O N :

Printed by *J. Wallis*, for *Walter Kettilby*, at the  
*Bishops-Head* in *S. Pauls Church-Yard*. 1683.

A  
STERMON

PREACHED

Before the Right Honourable

THE

Lord Mayor

AND

ALDERMEN

AT

St. Andrew's Church, London, 1782

By Edward Jones, Fellow of the College  
of St. Andrew, London

LONDON

Printed by J. Smith, in Pall-mall, 1782



[ 1 ]  
A  
SERMON

Preach'd before the  
LORD MAYOR,

ON

S. Matthew, *Chap. v. vers. 3.*

*Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the  
Kingdom of Heaven.*

THE Christian State (that is, a Holy  
Life) is frequently exprest in the  
Scriptures by the Metaphor of a  
*Building*; and the Metaphor may  
suggest thus much unto us, That there is a cer-  
tain Order to be observed in raising the Moral  
Structure as well as the Mechanical: There are  
some Virtues proper for the Foundation, upon  
which all the rest must be built, and without  
which they cannot stand; such are all those that

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tend to the humbling of our minds, as a true knowledge of our selves, and a conviction of our unworthiness, and a just abhorrency of our natural corrupt desires : There are others proper for the superstructure and finishing of the work ; such are all those that tend to the raising of our Affections, as Love, Joy, Hope and Confidence in God. Now whosoever in his *Building* shall neglect this Order, and intend the raising of his Affections, before the humbling of his Mind ; he that shall affect the Love of God before the Mortification of Nature, a Zeal for Religion before the condescensions of Charity, a sort of spiritual Saintship before a moral Change ; such a one is like that foolish builder mentioned by our Saviour in the close of this his Sermon on the Mount ; he may make a fair shew of a house, but he bottoms it upon the sand ; and when *wind and storm and flood*, that is, when any searching temptation shall come and assault it, it will certainly fall. It was not therefore casually, or without a particular design that our Saviour began his holy institution with this Duty of the Text, and recommended Poverty of Spirit to his Disciples before all other ; The very Order it bears imports no less than this, That Poverty of Spirit is a Duty that requires the beginning of our care, and the first of our applications ; because that so long as  
we

we are without it, it is impossible for us to make any holding progress into the state of Christianity. Which truth will farther appear from the explication of the words: In order to which I shall determine these two Questions; *First*, Who are meant by the *poor in Spirit*? *Secondly*, What is meant by the *Kingdom of Heaven*, to which the *poor in Spirit* are here intitled. As to the *First*, I take these words, *Blessed are the poor in Spirit*, to bear a parallel sense to those we meet with *Psal. 15.* where the Psalmist having put the question, *Lord, who shall dwell in thy Tabernacle, and who shall rest upon thy holy Hill?* He answers *ver. 4.* *He that is lowly in his own eyes:* In which expression we know that by *Eyes*, is meant the inward sight of Imagination, that faculty of the Soul, wherein we form our Images and conceptions of Things, and value them accordingly; So that by *Lowly in his own Eyes*, is meant, a Man little in his own Conceit and esteem: Now the word *Spirit* (as it relates to Man) is taken indifferently to signify either the whole Soul or any of its faculties; and I presume that in the Text it is taken to signify this particular faculty of Imagination; and so *Poor in Spirit* and *Lowly in his own Eyes*, appear to be expressions of the same importance, they carry in them the same notion and thought, and denote

a person that is Little in his own conceit or esteem, that is, (in a word) an Humble Man. I confess that the word *Spirit* is most frequently used to signifie the Irascible or passionate part of the Soul; and so *Poor in Spirit* might naturally be interpreted of such a one as is little in Passion, calm in Resenting, slow to Anger: but then this Beatitude would fall to be the same with that at the 5th. v. (*viz.*) *Blessed are the Meek*; which as we cannot easily guess to have been intended, so we must reasonably conclude that by *Poor in Spirit* in the Text, is meant no other than the Humble Man. I come to the second Question, *viz.* What is meant by the *Kingdom of Heaven*, to which the *poor in Spirit* are intitled?

It is evident from many passages in Scripture that this Phrase *The Kingdom of Heaven*, does signifie not only the Future blessed State where the Faithful are said to reign with *Christ* in a full participation of Immortality and Glory, but it likewise signifies the present Christian state, where *Christ* is said to reign over the Faithful by the influences of his Grace and the discipline of his Gospel: Thus the holy Spirit hath thought fit to signifie Man's Happiness and his Duty by the very same expression: Whether First To suggest one principal point of Wisdom, that is, That we should never think of our Happiness, but

but we should at the same time think of our Duty too, and the necessary dependance that the one hath upon the other : Or *Secondly*, To intimate that the Kingdom of Heaven both here and hereafter, that is, the two states of a Christian in this Life and in the next, though they differ in Circumstances, yet in the main Essential they are but one and the same : For Example ; It is but an accidental Circumstance to a Christian that he be either a Traveller or a Citizen, that he be either Militant or Triumphant ; but it is an everlasting Essential to him that he be Holy ; and in this both states must agree. As therefore the Kingdom of Heaven may justly ravish our thoughts with the notion it bears of the Beati-fick presence of God, of the Company of Angels, of Glory, Pleasures and Joys that are un-mixt and eternal ; so it may as justly serve to awaken our Care and diligence and strict Inspection of our selves, to consider that this very Kingdom must be begun within us ; we must *Here* lead the Heavenly Life, we must *Here* conform in Saintship to the Blessed that are above ; and all the Graces that they have in Perfection, we must *here* have in Degrees, and all aspiring towards perfection : 'Tis the Kingdom so begun that shall have its consummation in bliss : But if the Spirit of this Kingdom do not work in us and change



change us Here ; if our corrupt inclinations do not dye before us, but we continue Filthy ; the Future State can never change us ; By subdaction of the Means, by incapacity of the Subject, by irreversible Doom, we must be *Filthy still*.

The Kingdom of Heaven bearing these two different significations of Grace and Glory, the Question still remains which of them is meant in the Text ; and I conclude that in the Text is meant the Kingdom of Grace for these following Reasons : *First*, because Grace must necessarily be first in Order ; and accordingly the Apostle is express St. James 4. 6. *God giveth Grace to the Humble*: *Secondly*, Because the single vertue of Humility cannot by it self be intitled to Glory, but only in conjunction with those other vertues that must be built upon it: And *Thirdly*, Because of other parallel Texts which may serve to guide us in the interpretation of This ; particularly that in St. Luke 18. 17. where our Saviour says that *Except a man receive the Kingdom of Heaven as a little Child, he shall in no wise enter therein* ; In which words, as the Resemblance of a *little Child*, doth expressly signifie the Duty of my Text, so by the Kingdom of Heaven that must be *Received*, that must be taken into us, cannot possibly be meant any thing but the Discipline of Grace in our hearts: For these Reasons

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I conclude that by the Kingdom of Heaven in the Text, is meant the State of Grace, or the present Christian State: And so the meaning of the whole Verse will appear to be this (*viz.*) That the Humble Man is blessed, because he is properly dispos'd and qualify'd to become a true Disciple, a good Christian. This being the meaning of the words, I shall form my Discourse upon them in this Method;

1. I shall shew the nature and reasonableness of the Duty of Humility.

2. I shall shew its influence, usefulness and necessity in order to attaining the true Christian state.

*First*, Humility is a quality that relates not to Mens Fortunes but their Minds; It calls no man from his Rank, nor divests him of his Titles; Poverty of Spirit is well consistent with height of Place; and the Overtures of Grace are as free to the Great and Noble, as to the Mean and Poor of the World. I confess 'tis too commonly seen that Men do yield up their Minds to their Fortunes, and lose the measure of themselves in the Bulk of that which hangs about them; And this indeed is the reason why the Apostle has said, *Not many Mighty, not many Noble*: But though this be common in Effect, 'tis no way necessary in its Cause. *David*, though  
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the Head of a splendid Court, could give this Testimony of himself, *Lord, I am not high-minded, I have no proud look*; and I hope that this Honourable Assembly can produce many instances of such as are Great in Character and as Great in Condescensions. We need not therefore Debase our selves to be Humble; and much less need we Calumniate our selves; We need not make our selves worse than we are, and charge our selves with Hyperbole's of Faults and Infirmities to become Vile in our own Eyes: No, Humility is always the greatest piece of Justice in the world; For be our Condition what it will, let us but know it as really it is, and we need no other argument to make us humble. Pride is of that kind of Admiration which always proceeds from Ignorance and Mistake; There is no room for it when we know our selves as we are, but only when we feign our selves such as we would be; when we suffer none but Affection to be our Painter; when we are so pleas'd with the account that Self-love brings in of us, that we thereupon stifle all farther search: When we have admitted this Imposture to pass upon our understanding, 'tis then only we admit of an Opinion of our selves: And this intimates the Reason why the Softest Heads are always puffed up the soonest. Humility therefore, though it be commonly esteemed

esteemed the greatest piece of Self-denial in the world, yet in sober reality it is far from it; It is no other than the bare Owning of our selves. Whereof I proceed to give you proof.

'Tis a strong Sarcaſm upon humane Pride that we meet with *Ecc. x. 18.* where 'tis ſaid, *Pride was not made for Man*: For fancy Pride where you will, 'tis no where ſo improper, no where ſo unbecoming as in Man: Not becauſe his Make is only of the common Clay; neither temper'd nor figur'd, nor ting'd more elegantly than that of other Creatures, as infirm and putrid and contemptible as any of theirs; This is but the leaſt part of his abaſement: 'Tis a ſmaller diſgrace to his Pedigree that *Corruption is his Father, and the Worm his Mother and Siſter*, than that Sin is his Off-ſpring. His Make is but Common, but his Depravation is wholly Singular; he being the only Evil, diſorderly and ungovernable Creature in the world. Let the Sea then be proud whoſe *Waves know their bounds*; Let the Beaſts be proud who live agreeable to the Laws of their Nature; The Locuſts and Catterpillars *who are God's armies*; The *Wind and Storm that fulfil his word*; But let not Man, the only Rebel in Nature, that ſtands diſtinguiſh'd from the reſt of the Creation, not ſo much by his Reaſon as by his Guilt, the only Heir of Wrath,

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and Shame and Misery, let not him be Proud; *Pride was not made for Him.* I confess this Prospect that I have now given of Man, shews him at the Least; but let us turn the Glass then, and look on him in his fairest and best Estate, let us look upon his Nature as ennobled with all the Perfections that it is capable of. And are not the Accomplishments of Art, and Aides of Fortune, and Endowments of Wisdom and Virtue Valuable things, and matters of esteem? and may not the itch of our Imagination please it self with these? I confess that all these are indeed Valuable things; but I assert farther, That Man ought not to value himself for them; For, here lies the Point, They are not His: They are God's, only intrusted to him; they are so many Sums received, for which he stands accountable; they are Treasures and *Talents committed to the Earthen Vessel*, but yet the Vessel it self is no more than Earthen still. And therefore though the Evil we are obnoxious to, be the most proper matter of our Humility, yet we may find that there is Argument for Humility to be drawn from every thing that is Good in us: I call it *Good in us*, because the calling of Good Ours has been the Cause of too much mischief; It being the sole Hinge that Humane Pride turns it self upon. 'Tis from the prejudice  
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of a Vulgar mistake that we call any advantages supervenient to our nature by the name of Acquisitions, as if the getting of them might be attributed to the glory of our own Counsels and endeavours : The notion is absolutely false in Divinity, where we are taught that they are all Gifts and Receptions : *What hast thou* (says St. Paul, directing his question to the Boaster) *What hast thou, that thou hast not received ?* 'Tis God that, to the attainment of all Outward good things, gives both the Means and the use and the Issue ; that to the attainment of all Inward accomplishments, gives both the Capacity and the Application and the Success ; That to the attainment of all Moral Perfections, gives both the Power and the Will, and the Deed : 'Tis He that first establish'd the Relation that all Causes bear to their Effects, and in his particular Providence does either continue, or enlarge, or controul, or suspend their influence, according to his pleasure. So that Nature is no other than God's Ordinary method of acting, as Miracle is his Extraordinary, and Fortune his Secret method : And therefore those Effects which proceed from the working of Natural Causes, and the deliberate use of Means, those Effects which we pretend to as Ours, are as much from God, as those whose productions are either Supernatu-

ral or Fortuitous, to which we do not pretend (For Instance) In the Widdow of *Sarepta's* Oyl, that part which grew on her Tree was as much from God, as that which grew in her Cruise: In *Solomon's* wisdom, that Measure that directed his Choice in the Temple, was as much from God, as that which was superadded by reason of his Choice: In *Israels* Victories, their beating the *Amalekites* by dint of Sword, was as much from God, as their demolishing the Walls of *Jericho* with the blast of a Ram's-horn. No Man's Riches or Grandeur can be more his Own than *Nebuchadnezzar's* was his; and yet for but assuming thus much unto himself, for this reason expresly, he was debas'd, and unman'd and thrown out among the Beasts: No Man's Wit or Eloquence can be more his own than *Herod's* was his, and yet for assuming this glory to himself, he was given up to be devoured by Worms. And if these Talents are still God's in Property, tho' they are Ours in Possession (as it appears by these Instances they are) much more are all Moral Perfections so, towards the attainment of which our faculties and dispositions are much weaker. The holy Scriptures teach us nothing more frequently, nothing more instantly than this, *That Every good and every perfect gift cometh from above; That Of our selves we can do nothing; That,*

That, *All our sufficiency is from God*: Passages to this purpose are very numerous, as if the holy Spirit were more than ordinarily Jealous of our Incredulity in this Point: And why now is all this? Why does God rather dispense good things to us, than suffer us to acquire them to our selves? Why are all our Perfections Gifts? And why does God so frequently and so instantly put us in mind that they are so? We may learn the reason of all from the fore-mentioned place of the Apostle, 1 Cor. iv. 7. where he adds, *Why then dost thou glory as if thou hadst not received?* We receive for this very purpose that we should be Humble: For to Receive and to glory, to be obliged and yet to be proud, is pure absurdity; as absurd as it were for a man to think himself rich, only because he has borrow'd a Sum. So long therefore as we keep our minds possess'd of this Truth, That all the good that belongs unto us is of God's Free Grace and arbitrary disposal; so long as we thereby retain the just measure of our own littleness, and worthlessness, and want; so long we are properly dispos'd to give God *the glory due unto his Name*, that is, the acknowledgment and praise, and retribution of that which he has given us: But as for Pride (whatsoever stock it grows upon) it is an Imagination that exalts it self against the Interest



Interest of God ; It is express Sacrilege, for it always robs God of so much honour as it places upon our selves.

And hence I pass to my second Head, which is, To shew the influence and usefulness, and necessity of being Humble in order to the attainment of the Christian State. Which State the Apostle has expressed very fully and distinctly in these three words, Wisdom, Righteousness, and Sanctification or Holiness, 1 Cor. i. 30. these are the three Integral parts of Christianity, and for Methods sake, I shall shew how Humility is subservient to each of these. And first, to Wisdom.

Wisdom is that perfection that is necessary to the Christians understanding, and it consists in the Knowledge and approbation of Divine Truths: Now there is no access unto Truth in divine things, but only through Faith ; Faith is all the security we have against deception : And what is Faith but the Humbling of Reason, the beating down of Imagination, the bringing of thoughts into Captivity ; A profest Enemy to the Opinionative and the Disputer, and utterly inconsistent with the Pride of Understanding ? So that we cannot so much as approach unto Truth but under the conduct of Humility. But this is not all ; For such



such is the nature of Truth, that after we have embrac'd it, we can never give it a fixed entertainment, nor ever be secure of not starting from it again, unless we continue under the same influence of Humility. For Truth, though it want not beauty, yet it is plain and simple, uniform and always alike : Its first and strictest obligation to all its Followers, is that Advice of the Apostle, *To be of the same mind, To walk by the same Rule, to speak the same thing.* So that he that will fix upon Truth, must necessarily be humble in this respect, that is, He must content himself to think as others do, to agree with the vulgar notion, and to go in the common track : Truth cannot put on those various Modes and shapes that please the levity of humane affections : Truth cannot start any thing novel and strange, to take the multitude which admires nothing so much as Monsters : Truth can make no room for the pleasure of singularity, none for the itch of contradicting, none for the Glory of Heading, or the Interest of siding with a Sect : All these are the Rights and Privileges of Error ; insomuch that it is impossible for a man, unless he be absolutely humble, to resist the temptation of catching at Error, though he has Truth already in his hand. And to this purpose it might easily appear from the particular History of

of all Errours and Heresies that ever sprung up to the disturbance of the Church and the World; that not one of a hundred of them did ever spring from Invincible Ignorance and want of Light, but from Affected mistake and want of Humility: Either Ambition of Greatness, or the Thirst of Glory, or Impatience of a Defeat, or some other designing Intrigue of humane Pride, will appear to have been at the bottom of every Dissention. So that, All the different Opinions which obtain in the World, and the various mists that are cast upon the face of Truth, and the clamorous Pretences that are laid to Her by several sides, which ('tis certain) can never be but on One; All these (I say) do no way argue either the failure or Limitation of God's promise to his Church, *That he would send his Holy Spirit to guide her into all Truth*; They only argue this, That Men are Arrogant and Opinionative, and therefore will not stick upon every small occasion to run away from their Guide.

This therefore is the first advantage that Humility brings in towards Wisdom (*viz.*) it disposes Man to give a fixed entertainment to Truth. But *secondly*, In case of Errour (which no doubt the Humble man may sometimes be drawn into either by reason of Imposition or Surprize, but in this Case) Humility brings in another advantage of no less

less importance than the former; and that is, It always disposes a man to a ready Conviction and a quick Repentance; Which indeed is a greater instance of Wisdom than never to have err'd; Because Repentance is always a Vertue, whereas not to have Err'd may often be no other than Luck. The Humble man therefore though he may Err, yet he will never be a Heretick (as the Father distinguishes upon his own case;) He will never add Malice to his Infirmary, nor Contumacy to his Mistake; He is ever dispos'd to own that there is more Religion in Confessing Truth, than in Consulting Credit; and therefore he will much rather confess himself to have been a Fool once, than continue to be one always in point of Honour. But where Pride once twists it self with Error, there a Man's case looks as one sinking with a Weight at his Heels, which will be sure never to let him rise again. For Pride (that most mischievous of all Counsellors) will always be whispering this advice into the Ear. "If thou hast err'd, persist and justify it with argument and passion, for 'tis possible that so thou mayst get the Victory, and Victory is oftentimes of greater moment than Truth; For perhaps thou art a leading Man, and the esteem of thy wisdom is influential to the Conduct of others, and if so, why then one base Retraction may pull  
D. "down."

“down all that thou hast built; be sure there-  
 “fore that ’tis honest, ’tis for edification, ’tis for  
 “the glory of God that thou be Obstinate. What  
 Counsels of this nature Pride is always ready to  
 suggest, and how fatally her Counsels do obstruct  
 the Repentance of Mankind, whether in refer-  
 ence to Errours or to Crimes, might largely ap-  
 pear from the *Jesuites* Doctrin of Reputation,  
 as I may call those Instances, where they teach  
 how a man may dissemble, prevaricate and fal-  
 sifie in case of preserving the reputation either  
 of himself or of his Cause: And it was too grossly  
 exemplifi’d in those Measures of the *Roman Court*  
 (by which the Council of *Trent* was over-born)  
 where when it came to be debated whether or no  
 they should comply with the publick Vote of  
 Christendom and proceed to a Reformation,  
 though all agreed that it was needful to Reform,  
 yet Pride carried it in the Negative by suggesting,  
 That it would give advantage to the Hereticks;  
 Meaning thereby, that the acknowledgment of  
 any present errours or abuses in the Church, must  
 necessarily expose their great *Diana* Infallibility,  
 and make her lose more of her Worship. \*

Thus Humility is assisting to Wisdom, the  
 first perfection of the Christian state. The *second*

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\* See the *Advices of the Cardinals to Pope Adrian*, in *Father Paul's History*.

*cond* is Righteousness ; which Word (if taken in its proper latitude, only distinguish'd from, that which follows, Holiness) signifies the universal practice of Moral Vertue ; I come to shew how subservient Humility is to this.

Moral Vertue consists in the Government of our Appetites and Passions, and nothing can have a more happy influence upon this Government than Humility, because that according as a man esteems of himself, so always he Covets, and so he Resents. 'Tis the Proud man that thinks himself worthy of all Honours, and fit for all Employments, and competent for all Charges ; and this makes him aspire and graspe at all ; this makes him mount till he become giddy with the height, till he forget How, and by Whom, and to what purpose he ascended, and hence necessarily he becomes Vain and Rash, and Mischeivous, and Ungrateful in his Station : Whereas he that is little in his own eyes, is consequently little too in Desires, and moderate in Use, and faithful in Trust, and careful in Business, and always more aw'd in his thoughts with the future account and charge of high Fortunes, than he is transported by their present Splendour and Advantages. 'Tis the proud Man who as he thinks he merits all he gets, so he repines at all he misses, and this makes him discontented and envious, and so highly in-



just as to think his private disappointments a sufficient title for him to quarrel and move and overturn the World : But the Humble Man is he that *possesses his Soul*, that is master of himself, and keeps his temper under all the issues of Fortune ; He knows that the Sun does his duty, tho' he does not ripen his Vine ; he knows the Wind is not in his debt, though it does not fill his Sails ; he never perswades himself that the World was made for him, and therefore how little soever be the share he has in it, he finds sufficient argument of Content in considering how little it is that a Compound of Sin and Ignorance and Frailty can deserve. 'Tis the Proud Man that is censorious and calumniating and undutiful in all relations ; And the reason hereof is this, Because the progress is natural from an Opinion of our selves, to the Despising of others ; as natural, as it is for a Bladder to mount above the Water when once it is filled with Wind : And therefore St. Luke links them together (as genuine Cause and Effect) in that Character he has given of the *Pharisees*, Chap. xviii. 9. where he says, *They were such as trusted in themselves.* (or rather) *Such as were well perswaded of themselves, and despised others ;* Now be sure so far as we despise, so far we have cancell'd all the obligations of Manners and of Duty. Whereas Humility is the constant  
Spring

Spring of candor in Judgement, and sweetness in Conversation, of Love and Courtesie, and Service, and all the respective offices that are due unto Mankind. But that which renders the humble Man the best member of Society is this, That he is a fixed Friend to Peace : For forasmuch as all Quarrels are founded ( in pretence at least ) upon Injury, 'tis the humble man that never offers an Injury, nor ever presumes one offer'd where it is not, nor ever aggravates one where it is. We know that, in the judgment of the Law, every injury varies its measures according to the quality of the Persons against whom it is committed ; So that the same Act when done against a Prince, may be judged a Capital Offence, which if done against an Inferiour Person, would only be judged an Indecency : Now look what Variety of measures an Injury admits of, in the Judgment of the Law, from the Difference of Persons, the same Variety it admits of, in our own Judgment, from the different Opinion that we have of our selves ; So that the Spirit of a Man, when Proud, shall look upon the same Act as an unpardonable affront ; which, when truly Humble, he shall only look upon as a pitiable weakness in him that did it. Thus the Humble Man is always guarded against the Surprize of his Passion. And though Religion be the fairest Pretence,



tence, and that which does most Speciously engage Men in (what is most contrary to Religion) publick disturbance; yet the Humble Man is always aware of the Cheat; For he knows how to distinguish between the movements of his Passion and of his Conscience; The one only make a Man Firm, the other make him Violent, which the Humble Man never is: He knows it is his duty to *contend earnestly* for the Faith, but never Mutinously: He knows it may be his Duty to Dye for Religion, but never to Quarrel for Religion; for that is as absurd a Pretence, as if a Man should draw his Sword to maintain the Unlawfulness of Duels.

And this brings me to the last and finishing perfection of the Christian state, that is, Holiness: Which is the Christians Conversation with God, his Spiritual Life, consisting in the exercise of those Offices that are purely Religious: I come to shew the Influence of Humility upon These.

The Apostle that sometimes compares our Body to a House because of its natural Inhabitant the Soul, does likewise sometimes compare it to a Temple, by reason of its Divine Guest of the Holy Spirit of God: And if ever we will be Temples indeed 'tis Humility must make the Consecration; 'tis Humility that first distinguishes us from an Unhallowed Pile, that conciliates the Presence

Presence of God, and determines his Abode with us ; For the High and Holy One that inhabiteth Eternity, declares that he has but two Residences, *I dwell* (says he) *in the high and holy Place, with him also that is of an Humble and Contrite spirit.* Whereof if we enquire the reason, we shall find it to be this; Because Humility is the sole Foundation of Commerce betwixt God and the Soul. For, *first*, As Humility implies in its notion a due sense of our want and insufficiency, so it carries in it the whole Reason of Prayer and Application and Dependance upon God: 'Tis the thirsty panting *Hart that flies to the water brooks*, 'Tis the empty voided Soul that flames out into desire; and therefore God is said to *Give grace unto the Humble*, because of the necessary Tye that is betwixt Humility and Devotion. Whereas any greater thought of Worth and Sufficiency in our selves must necessarily, in proportion, supersede our address to God; and reduce our Devotion first to Formality, and then to Neglect. *Secondly*, As Humility implies in its notion a just sense of the Divine bounty from whence come all our supplies, so it carries in it the whole Reason of Praise and Thanksgiving, the which is the Christian Sacrifice; Whereas the Proud Man who naturally imputes the Success of things either to Fortune, that

that so he may seem obliged to none, or else to Skill, that so he may seem obliged to himself; in the first case he offers no Sacrifice at all; and in the second, all that he offers is *so his own Dragge*. In a word, as Humility implies in its notion a sense of our Own Unworthiness, so it is the same in effect with the Fear of God; as it implies a due sense of our Distance, so it is the same in effect with the Honour of God; as it implies a due sense of our Obligation, so it is the same in effect with the love of God: Of such extent is the influence and power of Humility, that let a man but take care not to check the conduct of this single Vertue, and it shall naturally and easily lead him through all the Offices of a Religious life. But on the contrary, what mischiefs Pride will bring upon Religion, we need not go far to inform our selves: For as the Son of *Sirach Eccl. vii. 3.* tells us of Pride, in reference to particular practice, That it makes a *Man Eat up his Leaves, and lose his Fruit, and leave himself as a dry Tree*; so we may say of it in reference to the publick profession of Religion, That it eats up its Order, and loses its Substance, and leaves Christianity an empty Name. 'Tis owing to the influence of this Vice, that instead of one Faith and one Consent in Religion, we see so many different Religions set on foot, and the

the greatest part of Professors overlook the main Offices of *Self-denial*, and whatsoever is burdensom in the Cross of Christ, and take up with a Religion that consists only in a notional zeal, and presumptuous Claims to God Almighty: 'tis owing to the influence of this Vice that we see many Zealots advanced above the use of Ordinances and Sacraments, into a pretence of Illuminations and Transports, and more intimate Communion with the Deity. Give me leave to make one more particular instance of the mischief of Pride in reference to the Office of Prayer. Pride in Prayer sounds indeed like a mighty solecism; for what possible consistency can we imagine between two such opposite dispositions of the mind? Prayer, the display of our wants, the imploring of succour, the humbling of our Selves as Dust and Ashes before the Lord our Maker and our Judge, What Agreement, what Room for Pride in this Holy Office? And yet even here Pride has insinuated its Poyson, and made that Office which ought to be the Bond of Unity, the Badge of Dissention. For Example,

Few of us can be ignorant of the expedience of publick Liturgies; or of the constant Usage of them in all Ages of the Church, or of the particular Excellency of ours of the Church of *England*, than which what Prayers can be more Piously

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conceiv'd, or more sensibly express'd, or more wisely accommodated to all humane exigencies? And yet, this notwithstanding, we see it come to pass that the joyning in these Prayers is not only neglected by multitudes of people; but it is counted a sort of abomination, and made a matter of Schism: And now whence comes all this mischief, but only from the Pride of those Men, who were resolv'd to withdraw all respect from the publique Prayers, that they might transfer it upon their own Gifts? Those who imagin'd that there were more Charms in their own Conceptions than the Publick, and that the use of such a borrowed Form would bring a Scandal upon their own Affluence; as *Naaman the Letter* thought that his washing in *Jordan* would be an affront to *Abana* and *Pharpar*: All which is no other than a meer phrensie of Pride. But what? Are we still of the *Lamian* Fashion? have we never our Eyes open at home? Can we not see our own faults? or have we not sufficiently heard of the Pride of the Church of *England*? We have heard of it; and we have likewise heard of an old Rancounter betwixt two Philosophers, not a little resembling the Case: The Cynick *Diogenes* meeting one day with the Excellent *Plato*, habited (as he usually was) in the



the decent Garbe of the Court, snatches his Mantoe from his shoulders, and treads it into the dirt, and cries out, *Thus I trample upon Plato's Pride; Plato gently takes up his Garment again, making only this Reply, 'Tis true, Diogenes, thou hast trampled upon my Pride, but surely with a greater Pride of thine own: I shall not run the Parallel so far as the Instance would bear, I shall only say this by way of Reflection upon it, That, if Decency be a Crime (as we see that it has sometimes been accounted one) Our Church is not ashamed of the Guilt; and if Cynical and Malicious treatment be Humility, her Adversaries Want not their share. To disown the Pride of Men, of whatsoever Constitution, were Pride it self, as much as it were to disown their Peccability; But I hope it will appear to the Indifferent, that the Church of England has not so much Pride as her Accusers; nor did ever shew either so much Insolence in Authority, or so much stomach against Authority as they have done. However, I have but one Wish for all, and that is this; That whatsoever measures of Humility are wanting in any of us, may by God's Grace and our own application timely be supply'd; Humility being the only Expedient to Christian Union; as it is the only Moral Disposition to the Kingdom of Heaven, and as it is*

the most certain Indication of real worth, where-  
 ever we find it. For Opinion of our selves is  
 like the Casting of a Shadow, which is always  
 longest when the Sun is at the greatest distance ;  
 but by the degrees that the Sun approaches, the  
 the Shadow still shortens, and under the direct  
 Meridian Light it becomes none at all: 'Tis so  
 with our Opinion of our selves ; while the good  
 influences of God are at the greatest distance from  
 us, 'tis then always that we Conceive best of our  
 selves ; but still as God approaches, the Conceit  
 lessens ; till such time as we receive the fuller  
 measures of his Graces, and then we become ab-  
 solutely voided, pure Nothing in our own Con-  
 ceit, and God appears to be (as really he is) *All*  
*in all.*

*To whom, &c.*

**F I N I S.**